PR$IACE TO FIRST EDITION.

WE live in an age in which the reflecting portion of mankind are much addicted to the contemplation of the works of nature. It is the object of the author, in this Treatise., to " interrogate nature/ with tbe view of inducing her to utter her voice in answer to some of the most momentous questions which the inquiring spirit of man can put.

He thinks it needful to state, thus early, that he proceeds on the inductive method in his inquiry, and not, on the one hand, after the plan of those British nationalists, who set out with a preconceived system, which they dignify with the name of Eational, and then accommodate all that they see to it; nor, on the other hand, of those German Intuitionalist,% who boast that they can construct the existing universe by <i *priori* speculation.

To guard against misapprehension, lie wishes it to be understood,, that he treats in this book of the Method of the Divine Government in the world, rather than in the Church; of the ordinary providence of God, rather than his extraordinary dealings towards his redeemed people.

The reader of severe taste will be inclined to regard the Introductory Book as too loose and discursive; and all the apology that the au^nwriias to offer is, that he was afraid of driving back the general reader, by leading him into the minu tins before he had contemplated nature under its general aspect.

The general reader, on the other hand, may be disposed to complain,*that the style of discussion followed in some of the Sections .and Notes of the Second and Third Books, is of too abstruse*a character. He lias to justify himself to such, by

etating,*that he did not feel at liberty, in such an
ago as this to